

**A—METSAT Field Terminal Alternative Prototypes for NPOESS  
Clarification of Commerce Business Daily Announcement of September 14, 2001**

To All Interested Potential Offerors: The purpose of this memorandum is to clarify the Request for Information (RFI), posted on “CBD Net” on September 14, 2001 in the “Special Notices” section of the Commerce Business Daily (CBD), under the Subject, “A—METSAT Field Terminal Alternative Prototypes for NPOESS”. Numbered questions follow, with the answers.

1. Not sure what an “**expression of capability**” entails. It is not clear to us how this relates to the later sections that seem to imply a greater level of detail is required.

Answer: The CBD notice stated the following:

“The Government requests interested, potential vendors responding to this notice to document their capability to potentially implement these design attributes in an open-architecture, cross-platform, Next Generation METSAT Field Terminal(s)”.

The Government is interested in identifying either developmental items, commercial items, or non-developmental items, as defined in the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Sub-Part 2.101, that can perform the functions and meet the physical characteristics of the “METSAT Field Terminal” design attributes. If presenting a commercial or non-developmental item, please explain when the item’s specification was developed.

2. If we discuss all of the “salient attributes” the level of detail could be considerable.

Answer: These attributes describe how the essential physical characteristics of the field terminals best meet the needs of the User Agencies. You may not need to address all of these attributes; however, it is recommended that you address your ability to meet Joint Technical Architecture (JTA) standards.

3. Since this is a potential contract for a prototype, and not production, what is the intent of the “unit price” attribute? What is the IPO’s intent here? What is meant by “Basis of Estimate”?

Answer: One of the essential attributes of the prototype design will be its unit price, which will be dependent on aspects of the prototype design(s). The IPO is looking for a field terminal design that can be produced inexpensively and will be attractive for purchase by the very broad civil and military communities. A “Basis of Estimate”, such as the term is commonly understood, is not required until Phase B, when we near completion of the prototype development contract.

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4. Will the successful prototype vendor be prohibited from competing on the **production** contract?

Answer: That is not our intent. Our intent is to use or acquire unlimited rights in data to make the architecture available to industry and to the user agencies for their possible use in letting production contracts. The User Agencies (the Air Force, Army, Navy, and Civilian agencies), not the IPO, will be responsible for any future field terminal production contract(s). The IPO anticipates user agencies will conduct full and open competition for production contracts. Industry should identify whether its design was developed at private or public expense. The ability of the vendor to compete for the production contract depends on whether the field terminal design meets the definition of “development work”, in FAR 9.5. The anticipated Phase B prototype development appears to meet the definition of “development work”.

5. The term, “evaluation criterion”, is used in the CBD. What does this refer to?

Answer: Following the section in the CBD entitled “SUBMITTALS”, an “approach” is requested for four notional terminals and an antenna. Four other parts follow, requesting a submittal for each. Therefore, the criteria for this RFI consist of a five-part response to this RFI. You are not required to submit an “approach” to all of the notional terminals in Item 1) (a-e).

6. It is unclear how and when to respond to this RFI.

Answer: You should indicate to the Government as soon as possible, by e-mail or letter, whether you intend to respond to the RFI. The point of contact is Mr. Jay W. Moore, whose contact information is in the CBD. The requested submission date for all responses is November 1, 2001.

7. Can the content of our RFI response be used to make award to the next phase? How many awards do you foresee making?

Answer: The content of your RFI response cannot be used to make a direct award. However, we intend to use it to formulate an acquisition strategy. While your responses cannot lead directly to a contract award, nothing prevents the Government from offering to you the subsequent opportunity to incorporate these responses in a future proposal. You may formally append this RFI response to a future proposal for a prototype field terminal contract. However, unless we are directed in writing to do so by an Offeror, the Government will not score your RFI response submitted in response to this CBD as part of any subsequent award. There is the potential for award of more than one Phase B contract.

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8. When do you anticipate the next phase's RFP being released?

We anticipate that an RFP will be released in late 2001 or early in Calendar Year (CY) 2002. A demonstration of the prototype is planned for the fourth quarter of CY 2002; however, the maturity of the technology will determine the exact timing.

9. What is meant by the Number Notes 25 and 26?

The numbered notes are in <http://cbdnet.access.gpo.gov/num-note.html>, and their content is as follows:

25. Information submitted should be pertinent and specific in the technical area under consideration, on each of the following qualifications: (1) Experience: An outline of previous projects, specific work previously performed or being performed and any in-house research and development effort; (2) Personnel: Name, professional qualifications and specific experience of scientist, engineers and technical personnel who may be assigned as a principal investigator and/or project officer; (3) Facilities: Availability and description of special facilities required to perform in the technical areas under consideration. A statement regarding industry security clearance. Any other specific and pertinent information as pertains to this particular area of procurement that would enhance our consideration and evaluation of the information submitted.

26. Based upon market research, the Government is not using the policies contained in Part 12, Acquisition of Commercial Items, in its solicitation for the described supplies or services. However, interested persons may identify to the contracting officer their interest and capability to satisfy the Government's requirement with a commercial item within 15 days of this notice.

10. What is the budget for the prototype development and demonstration acquisition?

The Government declines to provide budgetary information at this time. This is source selection sensitive information, as defined in the FAR at 3.104.

Thank you for your questions. Please direct inquiries to [jay.moore@noaa.gov](mailto:jay.moore@noaa.gov). You are advised that if you submit more questions within two weeks of the submission date the Government may not have time to coordinate a response.

**- END OF CLARIFICATIONS -**